

Charitable Giving News

October 4, 2008

The Charitable IRA Rollover Is Back!

The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (the “bailout”) signed into law by President Bush on October 3rd contains important provisions relating to charitable giving. The law extends the IRA Rollover that expired last December now through December 2009. The law provides that, in each of the years 2008 and 2009, an owner of a traditional or Roth IRA may instruct the trustee to distribute directly to a public charity up to \$100,000 without the distribution being included in taxable income, and that distribution will count toward the IRA owner’s mandatory withdrawal amount. Now is the time to consider taking advantage of this opportunity while assisting RTS.

If you are age 70 ½ or older, new legislation now allows you to make cash gifts totaling up to \$100,000 a year from your traditional or Roth IRA to qualified charities without incurring income tax on the withdrawal. This is good news for people who want to make a charitable gift during their lifetime from their retirement assets, but have been discouraged from doing so because of the income tax penalty. It is often best to use IRA assets and/or other tax sheltered funds when making charitable gifts where that is possible.

Charitable IRA Rollover Provision

The provision permits distributions from traditional IRAs or Roth IRAs to qualified public charities and private operating foundations as described in IRC 170 (b)(1)(A). Whereas such distributions were previously income taxable, they are now excludable from gross income, eliminating the income tax penalty for such charitable gifts. The following limitations and restrictions apply:

- The individual for whose benefit the plan is maintained must have attained the age of 70 ½ or older at the time of gift.
- Qualified charitable distributions may not exceed \$100,000 in the aggregate in any taxable year.
- The provision applies to tax years 2008 and 2009 only. Qualified distributions must be made by December 31 of each year.
- Qualified distributions must be made directly to the charity by the plan trustee. Contact your plan trustee for information on how to initiate a transfer.
- Qualified charitable distributions may be excluded from gross income for Federal Income tax purposes. However, no federal income tax deduction is available. Certain states may not exclude gift amounts withdrawn from an IRA for state

income tax purposes.

- Only outright gifts are eligible. Distributions to charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, pooled income funds and other split-interest arrangements do not qualify for special tax treatment.

- Qualified contributions may be counted toward the Minimum Required Distribution (MRD) for a donor's IRA accounts.

- Qualified contributions are not subject to the deductibility ceiling (50% of AGI) or the 2% rule that requires that itemized deductions be reduced by 2% of AGI in excess of \$150,500 for tax year 2006.

- Gifts from retirement accounts other than IRAs—such as 401k, 403b, and SEP accounts—are not eligible. Donors may be able to make qualified transfers of money from other accounts to their IRA, and then make a charitable gift from their IRA. Check with your tax adviser.

- Distributions to Supporting Organizations as described in IRC 503(a)(3) and Donor Advised Funds as described in IRC 4966(d)(2) are specifically excluded.

- Donors who do not itemize their Federal income tax returns may make qualified IRA gifts and exclude such gifts from their reportable income.

Who is most likely to benefit?

- Individuals who take mandatory minimum withdrawals, but don't need additional income.

- Individuals who wish to give more than the deductibility ceiling (50% of AGI).

- Individuals who are subject to the 2% rule that reduces their itemized deductions.

- Individuals whose major assets reside in their IRAs and who wish to make a charitable gift during their lifetime.

- Individuals who intend to leave the balance of their IRA to charity at death anyway.

For more information or assistance in facilitating a transfer of funds from your IRA to Reformed Theological Seminary please contact Mr. Robert T. Bridges, Executive Vice President, RTS Foundation, at 800-926-4787 or at rbridges@rtsfoundation.org.

PLEASE NOTE: This summary is offered for information only and is not intended as legal or tax advice. Consult your own legal or tax advisor before making any decision based on this information.